

# The Notaras Family and Its Italian Connections

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Based on our present knowledge, the Italian connections of the Byzantine Notaras family began in the latter part of the thirteenth century and ended with the turn of the sixteenth century. These connections came to pass in varying historic-geographical settings and went through various stages of development. They had a major impact on the family's history; indeed, various members of the family owed their importance in late Byzantine history to them. It was because of this family's influence on politics, business, and social life that these connections acquired a dimension which went beyond the individual case and affected the fundamentals of Byzantine-Italian relations throughout two centuries.

The first setting of this history of connections was the southern part of the Aegean Sea, the area between the peninsula of the Morea and the island of Crete. Here, at the end of the thirteenth century, the interests of a revived Byzantine Empire clashed with the interests of an emerging Venetian colonial empire. This antagonism was brought to a head in various ways, ranging from trade barriers to piracy and even open warfare. Chryssa A. Maltezou has proven conclusively that the *sebastos* Paulos—who served Byzantine emperor Michael VIII, and who in 1270 wrested the island of Kythera (Cerigo), halfway between Crete and the Peloponnese, from the control of the Venetians and was rewarded with the governorship of the island—is not to be seen as a member of the Monemvasiot *archontic* family of Eudaimonoioannes, as has been assumed since Karl Hopf. He is, rather, the first representative of the Notaras family who can be traced in the sources.<sup>1</sup> Despite his decisive role in winning back Kythera (Cerigo), Paulos Notaras was not able to establish a personal dominion; in all likelihood, however, he was one of the three Greek *archontes* who was to determine the destiny of the inhabitants of this island.<sup>2</sup> He probably took advantage of the good location of the island to carry out raids on Italian ships and maybe even raids on more distant Latin territories. That he and his followers were not always successful in these actions is evident by the fact that in 1301, during the Byzantine-Venetian war, his son Michael was taken prisoner by a Cretan commando sailing on a ship whose commander was probably the Candiot Phylipus Bicon-

<sup>1</sup>Ch. A. Maltezou, *Βενετική παρουσία στα Κύθηρα* (Athens, 1991), H, 205–17; 212 ff and IF, 2–8; 6 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., H, 215. For later Notarades on the island, see *ibid.*, B, 15–25; 16 f.

tolo.<sup>3</sup> After his arrival in Crete, the prisoner was sold for the large sum of 6,050 hyperpyra to two influential inhabitants of Candia, John de Molino and Andreas Corner; there is an entry noting explicitly that the object of this deal knew about it and approved it. The sum was to be paid only after the appropriate ransom had arrived in Crete.<sup>4</sup>

There are some indications that this was a kidnapping made to order. Shortly after this event, two of the co-owners of the privateer, a Marcelianus Ferrante from the island of Naxos and an Andreas Cerlino (Cerbino) from the city of Candia, were hired with (another?) one of their ships and their *turma* by Guillelmus Sanudo, the son of the duke of Naxos, for a raid on the island of Santorini,<sup>5</sup> which at this time still belonged to Byzantium; even more important, the two men who had purchased the prisoner at just about the same time were also financing the outfitting of another corsair and may even have acquired shares in this boat.<sup>6</sup> No doubt, the goal of the Sanudo enterprise was to conquer the island and rule over it; it is not clear, however, whether the kidnappers and purchasers of Notaras had only monetary profit in mind or whether they intended to use their control over the noble Byzantine for more far-reaching purposes. Remarkably, one of those involved in the coup feared that the young Notaras would die or be taken away from the shareholders before they made their anticipated profit.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, it was precisely during these months that military confrontations between Byzantines and Venetians seemed to approach a new climax. Byzantine troops from the city of Monemvasia seized a ship that had been outfitted by the duke of Crete; the mission of the men on the ship was to land on the island of Kos and occupy its garrison. In response, the lord of the expeditionary force caught a number of Monemvasiots and had them put into prison.<sup>8</sup>

In this political climate, one certainly would have had reason to fear for the life of a Greek who was a prisoner and a slave and to be concerned about losing private control over him, the more so since this Greek, or at least his family, came from Monemvasia.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, there might have been early signs that the Venetian metropolis intended to end the long-standing conflict, as Venice put pressure on the island administration to stop the unilateral and independent actions of the Cretan Venetians and finally, in late 1302, gave the order to release all Greek prisoners, whether captured by the regular fleet or by corsairs.<sup>10</sup> Based on the sources available to date, we do not know how

<sup>3</sup>*Benvenuto de Brixano, notaio*, ed. R. Morozzo della Rocca, *Fonti per la storia di Venezia* 3, Archivi notarili (Venice, 1950), 79 f, nos. 215–218. Phylipus Bicontolo, Nicolaus de la Fasina, Marcelinus de Ancona, and Andreas Cerbino speak in the agreement *pro nobis et societate nostra*, i.e., they act as the representatives of a larger group of shareholders and crew members, the *homines* of the ship. The shares in the ship, some of which are also held by its crew, change hands several times within the short period for which the history of the ship can be followed: *ibid.*, 89, no. 242; 113, no. 309.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 79 f, no. 216.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 109, no. 297. Ferrante may have been a subject of the duke of Naxos. Concerning this undertaking, see Ch. and K. Frazee, *The Island Princes in Greece: The Dukes of the Archipelago* (Amsterdam, 1988), 34 f. Regarding the combination of piracy and commerce in the person of Ferrante, see Morozzo della Rocca, *Fonti*, 103, no. 280 f; 112, no. 305.

<sup>6</sup>Morozzo della Rocca, *Fonti*, 89 ff, no. 243 ff.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 89, no. 242; cf. also 80, no. 218.

<sup>8</sup>S. Theotokis, *Μνημεῖς τῆς ἑλληνικῆς ἱστορίας*, I (Athens, 1936), 21, no. 48; cf. F. Thiriet, *Délibérations des Assemblées vénitiennes concernant la Roumanie*, I (Paris-The Hague, 1966), 98 f, no. 73.

<sup>9</sup>However, to my knowledge, the sources do not contain a clear statement about the Monemvasiot origins of the *sebastos* Paulos and the *sebastos* Michael.

<sup>10</sup>Thiriet, *Délibérations*, I, 101, no. 79.

this tug-of-war between private and public interests, between the Venetian central power and the Venetian colony, ended for the young Notaras. Perhaps his ransom arrived very fast and at least freed the small-time kidnappers from their financial troubles, or maybe the noble Byzantine was not released until a year later by order of the Venetian government and his kidnappers indeed came away empty-handed.

Thus, up to the turn of the fourteenth century, politically and economically, in the southern part of the Aegean Sea, there was a storm brewing most of the time. Byzantines and Venetians relied primarily on their military power. Venetian and Byzantine merchants and sailors were active mainly as pirates. Private funds were used in large part to outfit privateers and to finance piracy. However, after peace was made in 1302, a new climate gradually seemed to take hold in this area, but not in full force and not without occasional major disruptions. Alongside military confrontation between the centers of Venetian and Byzantine rule in this region, there were increasing signs of economic cooperation between the merchants, financiers, and ship captains from Candia, Coron-Modon, Monemvasia, and other cities of Crete and the Peloponnese. Thus, the letters sent to the Venetian merchant Pignol Zucchello during the 1330s by his business partners stationed on Crete reflect lively trade and business relationships on an entirely equal footing with various Byzantines from Monemvasia.<sup>11</sup> A study on the development of merchant shipping between the Peloponnese and Crete, which was recently published by Charalambos Gasparis, shows that members of the Notaras family from Monemvasia must also have participated in this development. In any case, in the years from 1327 to 1333, a Konstantinos Notaras is mentioned who, as the owner of a ship, made several business trips between Candia and various places on the Peloponnese.<sup>12</sup>

Besides other, unknown residents of Greek-Byzantine territories, there were several well-known families from the city of Monemvasia who took part in this development, as evidenced by the names Strateges Sophianos, Konstantinos Paches (Pachys), and Nikolaos Daimonoioannes from the same period, and maybe also the name of Paulos Come from a later period.<sup>13</sup> The latter is of interest mainly because we know that the same name is inscribed on a tomb on the island of Kythera (Cerigo).<sup>14</sup> This seems to virtually confirm a remark that the patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos made in the *vita* for his predecessor, Isidore Boucheiras—namely that the Monemvasiots earned a reputation as seafaring soldiers and privateer captains in the early Palaiologan period and later became

<sup>11</sup>R. Morozzo della Rocca, *Lettere di mercanti a Pignol Zucchello* (Venice, 1957), 7 ff. The Venetian business partner of Zucchello, Vannino Fecini, reports for October 20, 1336, a business deal with a certain Domitri da Malvagia, in which a certain Gianachi Petaccio is also participating. A certain Andrea da Malvagia is also mentioned. They are trading in wine, cheese, and soap. There is evidence that in the early 1340s there was also a Venetian consul in Monemvasia (Ch. A. Maltezos, 'Ο θεσμός τοῦ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Βενετοῦ Βαΐλου [Athens, 1970], 230), which indicates that political and economic relations had improved and strengthened.

<sup>12</sup>Ch. Gasparis, "Ἡ ναυτιλική κίνηση ἀπὸ τὴν Κρήτη πρὸς τὴν Πελοπόννησο κατὰ τὸν 14<sup>ο</sup> αἰῶνα," *Τὰ Ἱστορικά* 9 (1988), 287–318; 291, table 2.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 295 f, 299. Regarding the Eudaimonoioannes, Pachys, and Sophianos in Monemvasia in the 12th/13th centuries, see Maltezos, *Βενετική παρουσία*, II, 3, and G. E. Ince, T. Koukoulis, and D. Smyth, "Paliochora: Survey of a Byzantine City on the Island of Kythera. Preliminary Report," *BSA* 82 (1987), 95–106; 97.

<sup>14</sup>Gasparis, "Ἡ ναυτιλιακή κίνηση," 299. Maltezos, *Βενετική Παρουσία*, II, 214 n. 50, quotes the inscription ἐνθα κτε Παῦλος Κόμης, which was found when the island was ruled by Britain. Karl Hopf thought at the time that it referred to Paulos Eudaimonoioannes, while Maltezos thinks it refers to Paulos Notaras. It can, however, also be a proper name.

more prominent as merchants and merchant shippers.<sup>15</sup> We thus have the creation of a new economic microregion in the southern Aegean which transcended political boundaries and political controversies and thrived on a variety of stimuli from a variety of sources. We get a very strong impression that the Notaras family from the city of Monemvasia, with its ties to surrounding islands and the neighboring Byzantine and Latin cities, must have taken part in this development, although whether in an active or a passive way we are not yet in a position to tell.

The next setting for the Italian connections of the Notaras family is not the Byzantine province or a Byzantine-Latin border region, but the capital, Constantinople. In the middle of the fourteenth century, for reasons which have yet to be established with certainty, a branch of the family left its home on the Morea in order to seek its fortune on the shores of the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn.<sup>16</sup> It is interesting that this move brought about not only a change in geographical and political milieu, but also a change in the main Italian contact. In fact, the Notarades who entered politics and business in the late fourteenth century were clearly oriented toward the Genoese and their bases in the Romania, in Pera and Caffa, maybe also on Chios and Lesbos. These Notarades seem to have engineered their rise to political and social prominence mainly by supporting Co-Emperor Andronikos IV, who was rebelling against this father, Emperor John V, and, after Andronikos IV had died, by taking the side of his son John VII, as shown by Angeliki Laiou and after her by Nevra Necipoğlu.<sup>17</sup> At least two legacies from the provinces may have been helpful to their rise. The first legacy was their proficiency in the languages of this area. The first traceable representative of this branch of the family that settled in the capital probably served as an interpreter to the late Byzantine administration or the infighting imperial family,<sup>18</sup> and his son Nicholas was so well known all over town as a *diermeneutes* that sometimes he did not even have to be identified by name when people were talking about him.<sup>19</sup> The second legacy was their combining of political and

<sup>15</sup>D. G. Tsamis, Φιλοθέου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ Κοκκίνου Ἀγιολογικὰ ἔργα, Α: Θεσσαλονικεῖς ἅγιοι (Thessalonike, 1985), 327–423; 365.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. K.-P. Matschke, "Personengeschichte, Familiengeschichte, Sozialgeschichte: Die Notaras im späten Byzanz" (lecture presented at the 1991 annual meeting of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Byzantinisten in Frankfurt a. M.).

<sup>17</sup>A. E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Greek Merchant of the Palaeologan Period: A Collective Portrait," Πρακτικά τῆς Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν 57 (1982), 96–132; 108 f; idem, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System: Thirteenth–Fifteenth Centuries," DOP 34/35 (1980/81), 177–222; 220 n. 25; N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: A Study of Political Attitudes in the Late Palaeologan Period, 1370–1460* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1992), 203 ff.

<sup>18</sup>In the Venetian document dated April 8, 1397, which grants Venetian citizenship to Nikolaos Notaras, he is identified as the son of *uiri nobilis Georgii Notara Dermonophiti*: see J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391–1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1969), 486 f. Barker thinks the last word might be the name Dermokaites, but more likely it is a corruption of the word *diermeneutes* (interpreter).

<sup>19</sup>Cf. K.-P. Matschke, *Die Schlacht bei Ankara und das Schicksal von Byzanz: Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Geschichte zwischen 1402 und 1422* (Weimar, 1981), 176; R. Guiland, "Grand interprète," Ἑπ. Ἐτ.Βυζ.Σπ. 36 (1968), 17–26; 22. Later on, this function is assumed by Loukas Notaras, the title practically becoming a family attribute and still being used by Loukas' daughter Anna, living in exile in Venice: cf. N. G. Moschonas, "I greci a Venezia e la loro posizione religiosa nel XV° secolo," Ὁ Ἐρανιστής 5.27–28 (1967), 105–37; 134 f. Unfortunately, as far as I know, there is no positive evidence concerning the proficiency of the Notarades in languages. We learn from an entry made by the Venetian notary who wrote her will in 1493 that Anna did not know Latin; K. D. Mertziou, "Ἡ διαθήκη τῆς Ἀννας Παλαιολογίνας Νοταρά," Ἀθηνᾶ 53 (1950), 17–21; 20 f.

administrative functions with lively business activity. George, the first Notaras to grow up in the capital, is said by a later source to have been active mainly as a fish merchant.<sup>20</sup> His oldest son, Nicholas, by order of Co-Emperor John VII, made grain deals with the Genoese; in the 1390s, he was in and out of their colony of Pera near the capital so often that in the end he was made a citizen of this central Genoese colony in the Romania, and even acquired the status of a Genoese.<sup>21</sup> There is a record of Andreas, a younger son of George and the brother of Nicholas. In 1398, as a very young man, Andreas was on a business trip to the Genoese colony of Caffa on the Crimea; he was so young that his Byzantine trading partner was able to refute the financial claim presented by Andreas, and rightly so according to the Genoese authorities.<sup>22</sup>

The conduct of George Notaras and his sons at the Golden Horn and in the Black Sea may reflect yet another trait which the family had acquired in the provinces. In fact, the groups that were supporting the rebellious son and grandson of the emperor did not appear to differ from other interest groups in the capital and center of the empire in wanting to turn over what was left of the Byzantine Empire to foreign powers, namely to the Genoese and the Turks, who were at times in coalition to some degree with the Genoese; but, rather, they differed in that they sought closer economic and political contact with these two political powers and with the economic forces they represented. They wanted to take advantage of perceived opportunities of brisk business and active politics, and sought to derive new freedom of action from the diversity of interests among the foreign forces and powers which were active on the Bosphorus, whereas other groups held on to their old positions of immobility and isolation, overestimating their own importance and their own possibilities.

The changing orientation of various representatives of a new business aristocracy can be clearly detected in the role they played in redeeming the princes who were taken prisoners in the battle of Nikopolis, primarily the comte de Nevers and the future duke of Burgundy, Jean sans Peur. Some time ago, I showed that Western financiers and mer-

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Loukas Notaras informs us in a letter to future patriarch, Gennadios Scholarios, that of the five languages that his previous teachers said the Hellenes should be proficient in, he knew only one, namely Koine: Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά, ed. S. Lampros, II (Athens-Leipzig, 1912), 194, no. 7. These refer, however, only to various levels of speech and style of the Greek language; thus, this statement does not exclude the possibility that he may have known foreign languages.

<sup>20</sup>Uberti Pusculi Constantinopoleos libri IV, ed. A. S. Ellissen, *Analekten der mittel- und neugriechischen Literatur*, III (Leipzig, 1857), 21. Regarding the value of the statement in this source, see P. Schreiner, "Bizantini e Genovesi a Caffa: Osservazioni a proposito di un documento latino in un manoscritto greco," *Mitteilungen des Bulgarischen Forschungsinstitutes in Österreich* 2.6 (1984), 96–100; 99.

<sup>21</sup>D. Jacoby, "Les Génois dans l'Empire byzantin: citoyens, sujets et protégés (1261–1453)," *Storia dei Genovesi*, IX (1989), 245–84, has only recently clarified the complicated system of Genoese legal claims on persons of non-Genoese origin and shown that, from the second half of the 14th century, Genoese protection was extended also to members of the late Byzantine elite who did not live in Genoese colonies and settlements. At the same time, supporters of Orthodoxy and members of the Orthodox Church were not integrated into the Genoese establishment save for exceptional cases. Even the Notarades did not constitute such an exception, neither Nicholas nor Loukas having been granted *la citoyenneté génoise*. They had to content themselves with the *statut de Januensis* or the *statut de burgensis de Pera*: *ibid.*, 265 f. Of course, there is also the question of whether the two Notarades really wanted more than they were granted—whether they could have accepted more without jeopardizing their positions in Byzantium.

<sup>22</sup>Schreiner, "Bizantini," 96–100. It remains unclear whether Andreas could have obtained the status of Genoese protection. It is obvious that by the end of the 14th century, unlike his brother, he had not yet obtained it.

chants were not the only members of the international financial syndicate which provided the ransom demanded by the Turkish victors; Nicholas Notaras, the Byzantine interpreter and citizen of Pera, participated as well.<sup>23</sup> We now can say that this Notaras was not the only local financier in this syndicate. There was also Battista Argenti, member of an important noble family of businessmen from Chios, who is recorded in the sources as a merchant from Pera and Genoa;<sup>24</sup> as in the case of Nicholas Notaras, however, this means only that Argenti, by the end of the fourteenth century, had already acquired the citizenship (and the protection) of Pera and Genoa. Finally, a small part of the funds needed may have come from the noble Ragusan Franchus Mathe de Basilio (Vasiljević) who was in the Romania at that time.<sup>25</sup> This third southeast European participant in the international financial deal may signal that, at least sporadically, economic forces were at work in other cities of the Balkans that were ready and maybe even able to follow in the footsteps of the successful Dalmatian city on the Adriatic, which had developed into a southeast European business center of the late Middle Ages. Most members of this financial syndicate, however, were Genoese or financiers and powerful men who were of Genoese descent or had close ties to the Genoese, further evidence of the pro-Genoese orientation of the Notaras family from Constantinople.<sup>26</sup>

The kind of *realpolitik* that began to appear in these activities did not have the goal or the result of betraying Byzantium or of turning it over to foreign powers; this became obvious after Nicholas Notaras undertook an extensive trip to the West on behalf of the Byzantine emperor, Manuel II, in order to win financial and military support against the Turkish sultan, Bayezid. This trip certainly also had the purpose of transferring family funds to safety in Western bank accounts, thus preparing for a possible occupation of the Byzantine capital by the Turks. The family of the envoy Notaras, however, stayed at home, and he himself returned to Constantinople at a time when the situation of the city was becoming increasingly serious. It is peculiar that the stopovers which are known to date on this trip to the West included many major political centers, namely Venice, Siena, Paris, London, very probably also Dijon, but not Genoa.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, however,

<sup>23</sup> Matschke, *Ankara*, 179 f.

<sup>24</sup> J. Delaville de Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, I (Paris, 1886), 88, 90, 93: Baptiste Argenti marchand de Gennes/marchant de Pere. For identification, cf. K.-P. Matschke, "Griechische Kaufleute im Übergang von der byzantinischen Epoche zur Türkenzeit," forthcoming.

<sup>25</sup> B. A. Pocquet du Haut-Jussé, "Le retour de Nicopolis et la rançon de Jean sans Peur," *Annales de Bourgogne* 9 (1937), 296–302; 299: disbursements of the treasurer Oudart Douay to François Bazille de Raguse for expenditures on Turkish territory in the amount of 200 ducats for ransoming Christian prisoners. Regarding his person, see B. Krekić, "Ser Basilius de Basilio," *ZRVI* 23 (1984), 171–82; 172 ff. Concerning his stays in the Balkan trouble spot in 1396 and later, see N. Jorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, II (Paris, 1899), 60 ff. For a hint of his activities for the liberation of the prisoners, see *ibid.*, 67 n. 8.

<sup>26</sup> True, the redemption was taking place during a temporary easing of tensions in relations between Genoa and Venice: cf. K. Hopf, *Les Giustiniani: dynastes de Chios* (Paris, 1888), 55. Most of the released prisoners returned home via Venice; moreover, the agreement stipulated that those returning home had to stay in the city on the Adriatic until the funds made available by the financial syndicate had been reimbursed: cf. Delaville le Roulx, *La France*, 308 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Regarding his journey, cf. K. Hopf, *Geschichte Griechenlands vom Beginn des Mittelalters bis auf unsere Zeit*, II (New York, 1960), 63; J. W. Barker, "John VII in Genoa: A Problem in Late Byzantine Source Confusion," *OCP* 28 (1962), 213–38; 229 n. 3 (230); D. M. Nicol, "A Byzantine Emperor in England: Manuel II's Visit to London in 1400–1401," *University of Birmingham Historical Journal* 12 (1970), 204–25; 206.

at these stopovers Nicholas met, negotiated, or took joint action primarily with Genoese businessmen and bankers, especially with members of the extensive Grilli and Lomellini families with whom he apparently had previous contact.<sup>28</sup>

Whatever the case, it is certain that the deposits of the Notaras family in Genoese banks and financial institutions did not begin in the years of the prisoner redemption and the trip to the West. They increased very significantly, however, in those years. A list of the amounts owed by the Genoese state to various families, which was found by Michel Balard in the Genoese State Archives, shows that the Notaras deposits increased more or less continuously up to the 1420s.<sup>29</sup> This ledger of accounts lists the names of the most important Genoese noble families—the Vivaldi, Spinola, Cattaneo, de Mari, and Doria; consequently, these families must have had business contacts with Nicholas Notaras (and his family), but up to now nobody has succeeded in establishing the nature of these contacts or tracing them more accurately.<sup>30</sup> The entries stop in 1420 or 1426, maybe because the elder Notaras retired from public life and then passed away, probably in the early 1420s.<sup>31</sup> In any case, the Notaras deposits to the Genoese government debt or in private Genoese accounts were continued by his son Loukas; this is shown by records dating from the last years of his life, which have been noted only recently by Giustina Olgiati.<sup>32</sup> It is also possible that on various occasions there was political collusion between the Notaras family and key Genoese figures in the Romania, even though up to now there are only vague indications to this effect.<sup>33</sup>

By comparison, the Venetian connections of the family seem to have been much less developed during this stage of the family's history, even though Venetian citizenship *de intus* was extended to the sons of Nicholas Notaras in 1416.<sup>34</sup> However, the 1436–1440 ledger of the Venetian merchant Jacomo Badoer mentions Loukas Notaras only in passing, which is only partially explained by the fact that a *kommerkiarios*, Demetrios Notaras, plays a considerable role in the accounts of Badoer and, together with a Chostantin Paleologo, *chiefali d'Agatopoli*, sells the Venetian a large amount of grain.<sup>35</sup> Anyway, Badoer

<sup>28</sup> Matschke, *Ankara*, 179 ff.

<sup>29</sup> M. Balard, *La Romanie génoise (XIIIe-début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, I (Rome-Genoa, 1978), 347 ff.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 348.

<sup>31</sup> According to *PLP* 8 (1986), 185, no. 20733, the last time Nicholas is directly mentioned in the sources is for the year 1418.

<sup>32</sup> G. Olgiati, "Notes on the Participation of the Genoese in the Defense of Constantinople," *Macedonian Studies*, n.s., 6.2 (1989), 48–58; 50. The role played by Loukas Notaras in obtaining loans for Byzantium during the last weeks and months of the empire's existence needs to be studied in more detail. When comparing T. Bertelè ("Costantino il Grande e S. Elena su alcune monete bizantine," *Numismatica* 14.4–6 [1948], 91–106; 99 f) and G. Olgiati ("Angelo Giovanni Lomellino: Attività politica e mercantile dell'ultimo podestà di Pera," *Storia dei Genovesi*, IX [1989], 139–96; 167), one comes to the conclusion that apparently, within a short period, the Byzantine emperor was granted several loans, by different (although in some cases also by the same) persons, on varying terms, and that Loukas stuck out his neck for the emperor, because later on various creditors attempt to recover their losses from the Genoese deposits of the Notaras family.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Matschke, *Ankara*, 184.

<sup>34</sup> See text of the document granting the citizenship in 1397 in Barker, *Manuel*, 486 f; for entry concerning the transfer of citizenship to the sons, see Jorga, *Notes*, I, 250. Regarding the variants of Venetian citizenship, see R. C. Mueller, "Charitable Institutions, the Jewish Community, and Venetian Society," *Studi Veneziani* 14 (1972), 37–82; 42 f. Jacoby ("Les Génois," 265) thinks that, in 1397, Venetian authorities attempted to force the citizenship upon Nicholas Notaras, obviously in order to obtain his support at the imperial court. Apparently, however, they did not succeed in this since the Byzantine envoy had close ties to Genoese interests.

<sup>35</sup> *Il libro dei conti di Giacomo Badoer*, ed. U. Dorini and T. Bertelè (Rome, 1956), 108, 148.

was not able to make profitable deals with this Notaras.<sup>36</sup> Shortly before the fall of the Byzantine capital, it was Loukas Notaras himself who gave the Venetians cause for complaint, and was sitting on sinecures which affected Venetian business interests.<sup>37</sup> It is not clear why the Venetians wanted the fortification of the harbor on the Golden Horn, for which, in 1446, agents of the *magnificus et precellens vir dominus Lukas Notaras* made the necessary practical arrangements with the authorities of the Venetian colony;<sup>38</sup> at least, the Byzantines seemed to be equally interested in fortifying the harbor.

Thus, there was no hostility at all and even some measure of cooperation, but up to the middle of the century these relations did not compare in intensity and substance to those with the Genoese. The conduct of Loukas Notaras during the council negotiations in the late 1430s may fit this general picture. It is in any case peculiar that the interpreter and first minister of John VIII, with his multiple connections to Italy and his flair for using particular political configurations for his private profit, did not become a member of the delegation to the council, instead staying away from the meetings in Ferrara and Florence. The noble Venetians thought so, too, when they assigned the Byzantine quartermasters Dishypatos and Syropulos the lodgings for the participants in the council during their stopover in Venice; on that occasion they asked about the whereabouts of the two *mesazontes* Kantakouzenos and Notaras and did not hold back their opinion that at least one of them should have come along.<sup>39</sup> One of the reasons that Loukas Notaras renounced being a delegate may have been that the *mesazon* regarded the union of the churches with skepticism.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, he was enough of a realist to defend the goals and results of the negotiations for a union against George Scholarios, who was or became an outspoken opponent of the union, and to advise him to look at the facts.<sup>41</sup> However, a more important reason he stayed away could have been that Loukas would have preferred to negotiate the union of the churches with the council in Basel instead of with the Roman pope; this is probably the reason why he did not join the dragnet operation against the representatives the Council of Basel had sent to Constantinople, and maybe even undermined it.<sup>42</sup> He could not, however, prevent that the fleet chartered

<sup>36</sup>Cf. K.-P. Matschke, "Tore, Torwächter und Torzöllner von Konstantinopel in spätbyzantinischer Zeit," *Jahrbuch für Regionalgeschichte* 16.2 (1989), 42–57; 56.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 42 ff.

<sup>38</sup>Text in Maltezos, 'Ο Θεσμός, 170 ff. The *miles* Johannes Turzelo, who with Humanuel Eudaimonoiani and various Byzantine civil servants acted in the name of the *mezas doux* in conducting the negotiations with the Venetian *bailo*, is certainly identical with Giovanni (Janachi) Torcello, one of the most ambiguous characters in the interaction of political forces in the Romania on the eve of the fall of Constantinople and the first years thereafter: cf. F. Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen zur Geschichte Südosteuropas und der Levante*, I (Munich, 1962), 306 ff. This Cretan of Latin origin may have been a contact of the *mezas doux* with the Venetians. Later on, a Torcello appears also in the entourage of Anna Notaras in Venice.

<sup>39</sup>*Les "Mémoires" du Grand Ecclésiarque de l'Eglise de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le concile de Florence (1438–1439)*, ed. V. Laurent (Paris, 1971), 214.

<sup>40</sup>J. Gill, *The Council of Florence* (New York, 1982), 375 ff.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, 376.

<sup>42</sup>J. v. Zhishman, *Die Unionsverhandlungen zwischen der orientalischen und römischen Kirche seit dem Anfange des 15. Jahrhunderts bis zum Concil von Ferrara* (Vienna, 1858), 112; 101 f. The sources now available do not permit us to solve the question of whether Loukas Notaras did in any way intervene in the disputes about the bills of exchange held by the envoys of the Basel council. The papal agents in Constantinople tried to prevent payment of these bills. A. Krchňák (*De vita et operibus Joannis de Ragusio* [Rome, 1960], 30 ff) does not offer any new details about the Byzantine positions regarding the issue of the council, but merely reports the information which the cardinal sent by letter to the fathers of the Council of Basel.

in Genoa by the fathers of the Council of Basel to bring the Greek delegation to the council had to return without passengers to its home port. A last-minute change, namely, the use of the ships of the Venetian competition to reach the council's venue chosen by the pope, and negotiating with a pope of Venetian descent were presumably so disagreeable to him that he preferred to stay home and take care of domestic problems with the prince and future emperor, Constantine XI.<sup>43</sup>

It could very well be a result of the basic orientations which I have pointed out that the Genoese were those who were most concerned about the destiny of the family after 1453. In early 1454, Genoese envoys Luciano Spinola and Baldassare Maruffo were instructed to ask the Turkish sultan about the whereabouts of the children of Loukas Notaras and to obtain escort for them if possible. The reason given for this instruction was that their father and grandfather were "Genoese." Those giving this instruction knew at that time only that one son and two daughters had survived the Turkish massacres, but lived in *maxima calamitate et servitute*.<sup>44</sup> After these children had indeed managed to get safely to Italy, the Genoese authorities granted young Jacob Notaras a charter that was even more generous than the one his father Loukas had received in 1443, since it covered a larger region, which also explicitly included the Genoese center of Caffa in the Black Sea area, and did not have a time limit; his father's charter had been valid for no more than five years.<sup>45</sup>

Comparable actions by the Venetians are not known (to date),<sup>46</sup> even though the Notaras family members, as I have mentioned more than once, were also citizens of Venice. It is therefore peculiar that the surviving Notaras children took up permanent residence not in Genoa but in Venice, and pursued their Italian activities from the city on the Rialto. Thanks to the fragment of a ledger from the Greek colony of Venice published recently by Peter Schreiner,<sup>47</sup> these activities can now be traced much more accurately. Indeed, the person who kept the ledger was very close to the Notaras family, perhaps even holding a position similar to that of majordomo or financial administrator of Anna Notaras at the turn of the 1470s, the period from which these accounting fragments date. But the only Notaras siblings mentioned are Anna and her brother Jacob. The other two sisters (Eu-)Frosyne and Theodora, of whom at least the latter must still have been alive,<sup>48</sup> are not mentioned even where one would expect them to be, namely in connection with a deposit of the *meas doux* for his children in the Camera degli Imprestiti or Prestiti. The

<sup>43</sup>Compare the biography of Constantine by D. M. Nicol, *The Immortal Emperor* (Cambridge-New York, 1992), 15.

<sup>44</sup>T. Belgrano, "Prima serie di documenti riguardanti la colonia di Pera," *Atti della Società ligure di storia patria* (hereafter *ASLI*) 13 (1877), 207 f.

<sup>45</sup>C. Desimoni, "Della conquista di Costantinopoli per Maometto II nel MCCCCLIII, opuscolo di Adamo di Montaldo," *ASLI* 10.3 (1874), 299 n. 1, no. II (299 f). The recipient of the charter is free to live and to stay where he wants, without prejudice to the privileges formulated in the charter.

<sup>46</sup>Bartolomeo Marcello, the first Venetian envoy to the sultan after the fall of Constantinople, on July 17, 1453, is given no more than the general instruction to ask the conqueror for the release of all Venetian prisoners: F. Thiriet, *Régestes des délibérations du Sénat de Venise concernant la Romanie*, III (Paris-The Hague, 1961), 189, no. 2935; it is repeated on January 15, 1454 (*ibid.*, 194, no. 2955) and on August 16, 1454 (*ibid.*, 200, no. 2976).

<sup>47</sup>P. Schreiner, *Texte zur spätbyzantinischen Finanz- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte in Handschriften der Biblioteca Vaticana* (Vatican City, 1991), 107–23, no. 4.

<sup>48</sup>Theodora is one of the persons charged by Anna in 1493 with executing her will: Mertzios, "Η δι-αθήκη," 18.

accountant notes on March 11, 1471, that the loan that had been recorded under the name of Loukas Notaras and administered by him as a legal guardian had been transferred as part of a dowry, pursuant to the laws of the Venetian authority, to Donna Anna Palaiologina and Meser Jacob Notaras, and that an appropriate fee had been paid to (the official in charge) Donaldo Trebyzan (Trevisan).<sup>49</sup> The entry concerning the dowry is particularly unclear. Does it mean that Loukas Notaras had made this deposit in the form of dowries for his children, a custom followed by many Venetians,<sup>50</sup> or that a dowry had to be disbursed and this was the reason for the legal act?<sup>51</sup> In any case, this entry shows that Loukas left to his children, in addition to deposits with the Genoese public debt, other deposits with the comparable financial institution of Venice. The question is how this seed capital was used by the young Notarades in Italy.

In the records of the anonymous Greek banker from the Greek colony in Venice, we indeed find some traces of a lively business activity which point mainly to young Jacob. One of his business partners might have been the Venetian Geronimo Dolfín, to whom the accountant, on January 7, 1471, transfers 20 ducats on behalf of Notaras.<sup>52</sup> Even more explicit and more interesting is a business deal in knives with a Genoese whose name is not mentioned, but who on the same day was given 20 soldi to pay the customs duties for this deal.<sup>53</sup> There may also be a link between this deal and a letter from Genoa mentioned elsewhere.<sup>54</sup> Thus, at the beginning of the 1470s, the Genoese connections of the Notaras family still existed, and the deal mentioned above indicates that Jacob did indeed make use of his Genoese charter. According to the ledger, however, major business deals played but a secondary role.<sup>55</sup> Maybe at that point in time, the entourage of Anna Notaras was already discussing plans for the establishment of a Greek colony near Siena, plans which resulted in definite arrangements with the city authorities in the following year. These arrangements were to provide Greek emigrants with a new home in Italy, with land for settlement and cultivation, while trading was mentioned only in passing.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>49</sup>Schreiner, *Texte*, 112, no. 4 (62); 117.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. F. C. Lane, *Studies in Venetian Social and Economic History*, ed. B. G. Kohl and R. C. Mueller (London, 1987), 59; idem, "The Funded Debt of the Venetian Republic, 1262–1482," *Venice and History: The Collected Papers* (Baltimore, 1966), 87–98. In 1472, in another document, Jacob Notaras is still referred to as a *iuvēnis*: G. Cecchini, "Anna Notara Paleologina: Una principessa greca in Italia e la politica senese di ripopolamento della Maremma," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, n.s., 9 (1938), 1–41; 26.

<sup>51</sup>In Schreiner, *Texte*, 110, no. 4 (33); 115, a certain Physina receives 16 soldi to buy fabric for her trousseau. This can hardly be the sister (Eu-)Frosyne. But it may be of interest that the first version of the 1472 agreement with the city of Siena (see below) mentions the possibility that Anna Notaras and her successor may move away from the planned Greek colony, especially *pro maritando aliqua ex eorum puellis* (C. Calisse, "Montauto di Maremma: Notizie e documenti," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria* 3 [1896], 177–222; 211), while in the 1474 agreement this passage was amended to no longer refer to the necessity of marrying off the girls (Cecchini, "Anna Notara Paleologina," 40).

<sup>52</sup>Schreiner, *Texte*, 112, no. 4 (52); 116.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., no. 4 (54).

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., no. 4 (41).

<sup>55</sup>The fact that at the same time other emigrés from the Romania tried to reestablish active businesses in the Black Sea region with the help of the Genoese is documented by L. Michaelsen, "Michael Alighieri, Gesandter Kaiser Davids von Trapezunt, am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund (1461–1470)," *Ἀρχαῖον Πόντου* 41 (1987), 175–93.

<sup>56</sup>In 1472, first Jacob Notaras and then his sister Anna and her closest friends tried to obtain the citizenship of the city of Siena with the intention of establishing at the Monte Acuto in the Maremma, with the

The records from the Greek colony in Venice yield hardly any evidence of political engagement or participation in political decisions. They do reveal, however, an activity which for decades was to become the overriding concern of Anna Notaras: supporting the Greek refugees from the Romania and trying to preserve the cultural legacy of Byzantium. In one instance, money is given to a Greek trying to make a living as a seller of writing supplies, and there are several instances where funds are disbursed for the purchase of manuscripts, for paying various copyists, and for the acquisition of necessary writing materials.<sup>57</sup> In accordance with the location and the circumstances surrounding this action, the people mentioned in the accounting records as business partners or in a more general context are primarily Venetians and Greeks. Even though among the Venetian residents there are several with well-known names, as of now none of them can be identified with certainty. Contacts which could be of interest are those with the noble Mocenigo family—because, in 1493, a procurator Nicolò Mocenigo is named executor by Anna<sup>58</sup>—and with the well-known Boldù family—because a Leonardo Boldù, in 1468, is the Venetian envoy at the court of the Turkish sultan, Mehmed II, in Constantinople.<sup>59</sup>

The Greeks mentioned in the text also have yet to be identified through other sources. Still, some of them could be of Cretan descent, such as a certain Torcello, who sells wine and lends money to the accountant,<sup>60</sup> and an Antonios Tribizis, to whom a small amount of money is sent for some unknown service.<sup>61</sup> Even the accountant himself may be of Cretan descent, if he turns out to be identical with the Frangulios Servopulos later designated by Anna Notaras to conduct the negotiations with the Siennese.<sup>62</sup> In this case, a direct link to the father of Anna and Jacob, that is, to Loukas Notaras, could be established, because Frangulios, in his capacity as *kantzelarios* of the *bailo* Marco Querini, was the writer of the Latin text of the September 19, 1442, renewal of the Byzantine-Venetian treaty, which is also mentioned by the *Dierminefti* Notaras.<sup>63</sup> He was later en-

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settlement of Greek emigrants, *una specie di piccolo principato, sotto il vassallaggio di Siena*: Cecchini, "Anna Notara Paleologina," 24. One of the goals the city of Siena wanted to achieve with these negotiations was the renewed cultivation of this run-down and depopulated coastal region; thus, the Siennese representatives emphasized not only the good conditions for agriculture and cattle breeding, but also the easy access to the sea and the proximity of good harbors: *ibid.*, 29. Despite all this, it is striking that Anna and especially her brother, too, wanted to retire from the trading metropolis on the Adriatic Sea to this place in the *distretto* of Siena, which was totally isolated from the contemporary flows of trade. Other sources dating from about this time report that the Greek emigrants in Italy were discussing possibilities of survival and lifestyles: L. Labowsky, "An Unknown Treatise by Theodorus Gaza," *MedRenSt* 6 (1968), 173–98; L. Mohler, *Aus Bessarions Gelehrtenkreis* (Paderborn, 1942), 586–89.

<sup>57</sup>Schreiner, *Texte*, 109, no. 4 (14), among others.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 110, no. 4 (44); cf. Mertzios, "Ἡ διαθήκη," 17.

<sup>59</sup>Schreiner, *Texte*, 111, no. 4 (44); cf. F. Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au Moyen Âge: le développement et l'exploitation du domaine colonial vénitien (XIIe–XVe siècles)* (Paris, 1959), 390 n. 1; F. Babinger, *Mehmed der Eroberer und seine Zeit* (Munich, 1953), 279 ff.

<sup>60</sup>Cf. above, note 38.

<sup>61</sup>Schreiner, *Texte*, 109, no. 4 (14). Schreiner thinks he might be a representative of the well-known Venetian Trevisan family (*ibid.*, 119), but he could also belong to a Cretan family (of Venetian origin) whose most interesting member at that time was the copyist and priest Georgios Tribizios: cf. A. Diller, "Three Greek Scribes Working for Bessarion: Trivizias, Callistus, Hermonymus," *Italia Medievale e Umanistica* 10 (1967), 403–10; P. Mastrodimitris, "Γεώργιος Τριβίζιος (πρὸ τοῦ 1423–1485), κωδικογράφος τοῦ Βησσαρίωνος καὶ ἱερ-εὺς τῶν ἐν Βενετίᾳ Ἑλλήνων," *Θησαυρίσματα* 8 (1971), 49–62.

<sup>62</sup>Cecchini, "Anna Notara Paleologina," 27 ff.

<sup>63</sup>G. M. Thomas and R. Predelli, *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levanticum*, II (Venice, 1899), 352, no. 188.

trusted with the same or similar functions by the last Byzantine emperors, John VIII and Constantine XI, and by the last Byzantine despots on the Peloponnese, Demetrios and Thomas Palaiologos, prior to going into exile in Italy.<sup>64</sup> With these Cretan connections of Anna Notaras, which later grow even stronger,<sup>65</sup> the history of the family comes full circle, leading the last representatives of this family back to its beginnings and perpetuating the legacy of the family under different circumstances.

In conclusion, this again raises the question of the reasons for the Notaras family's change in tack in its westward orientation. These reasons, too, are probably again of a very personal and at the same time an entirely general nature. Giovanna Petti-Balbi has established recently that the city of Genoa with its permanent internal quarrels was not a good place of refuge for Greek emigrants and refugees from the Turks. She also has observed that, contrary to Venice, Florence, and Rome, the most prominent trading metropolis of Italy had toward the Greek-Byzantine world practically no opening that was not exclusively dominated by commercial considerations.<sup>66</sup> Catherine Otten-Froux has recently pointed out that two specific groups of Greeks can nonetheless be traced in Genoa, namely slaves and sailors, and that freed slaves of Greek descent had even formed their own consorteria, but that these Greek inhabitants of the Ligurian metropolis no longer had any connections to the countries from which they came.<sup>67</sup> She thus confirms once more that people from the Romania played practically no role in the city of Genoa; her observations also show that the few immigrants from the East who were let into the city were entirely absorbed by it and had to pay for their admittance with total integration into the urban society of Genoa.

In Venice, which had more immigrants from Greece and the Romania long before the fall of the Byzantine capital, an independent Greek colony came into existence during the course of the fifteenth century. It kept in touch with the native land to the south-east through numerous ties and managed to retain specific features of the societies from which it originated. As early as 1463, on the occasion of the establishment of a chair for the Greek language at the University of Padua on Venetian territory, the Greek humanist Demetrios Chalkokondyles expressed his conviction that the freedom of the Greeks lay in the hands of the Venetians and could be brought back only by them; he also spoke of the eternal gratitude that the republic of Saint Marcus deserved for this.<sup>68</sup>

The great hope of the Greeks to return to the Bosphorus with the help of the Venetians and as their followers was not to become a reality, but the smaller hope for a living space of their own on the foreign soil of Venice did come into being. The founding of a Greek brotherhood, the building of a Greek church, and the establishment of a Greek printing

<sup>64</sup> *PLP* 10 (1990), 220, no. 25183; cf. Matschke, "Personengeschichte," where his career is discussed in detail.

<sup>65</sup> Compare, in the same paper, the comments on the connections with Johannes Plusiadenos and Nikolaos Blastos.

<sup>66</sup> G. Petti-Balbi, "Libri greci a Genova a metà del Quattrocento," *Italia Medievale e Umanistica* 20 (1977), 277–302; 294.

<sup>67</sup> C. Otten-Froux, "Deux consuls grecs à Gênes à la fin du 14e siècle," *REB* 50 (1992), 241–48; 241 f. The author overlooked that the existence of a Greek consul in Genoa is documented also for the year 1418; cf. K.-P. Matschke, Rez. Karpov, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 106.1 (1985), 56.

<sup>68</sup> D. J. Geanakoplos, "The Discourse of Demetrius Chalcondyles on the Inauguration of Greek Studies at the University of Padua in 1463," *Studies in the Renaissance* 21 (1974), 118–44; 138 n. 63; 140.

shop made the hope materialize in such a way that at least part of the Byzantine world was brought into the Venetian lagoon, turning Venice into an *altera Constantinopolis*.<sup>69</sup>

The children of Loukas Notaras, thanks to the provisions their father had made concerning their finances and who would handle them, found it relatively easy to settle down in this world. Despite these preferential conditions, however, their lives apparently were not without problems. The oldest daughter, Anna, had to overcome a number of difficulties in her efforts to practice her inherited religion without hindrance in her own house in Venice.<sup>70</sup> Her confidant, Nicholas Blastos, was even interrogated under torture by the Venetian authorities about the intentions and decisions of his benefactress.<sup>71</sup> Her wealth, her background, and certainly also her personal abilities made her a key figure among the Greek emigrants in Venice during the second half of the fifteenth century and the most important promoter of their activities aimed at preserving and passing on their culture. The entries in the recently published ledger<sup>72</sup> are not the only evidence of her efforts on behalf of Greek manuscripts. With her support, the shortlived printing shop of Zacharias Kallierges and Nicholas Blastos produced the most beautiful Greek incunabulum, the *Etymologicum magnum* of 1499.<sup>73</sup> After Anna died, a valuable icon of Mary which she had brought from Constantinople found its place in the church that had been built by the Greek brotherhood and dedicated to St. Nicholas.<sup>74</sup>

For Anna's brother, Jacob, the Venetians probably did not hold out the same privileges as the Genoese, and operating a small or medium-size trading business was the best he could do.<sup>75</sup> If he nevertheless established himself on the Rialto, it was perhaps not

<sup>69</sup>Cf. J. G. Ball, "Poverty, Charity and the Greek Community," *Studi Veneziani*, n.s., 6 (1982), 129–45; 145.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. N. G. Moschonas, "I greci a Venezia"; 120 ff and 133 ff, docs. IX–XII.

<sup>71</sup>Mertzios, "Η διαθήκη," 18; cf. Ch. A. Maltezou, Κρήτη: Ίστορία καὶ πολιτισμός 2 (1988), 133.

<sup>72</sup>Cf. Schreiner, *Texte*, 107 n. 48.

<sup>73</sup>E. Legrand, "Zacharie Callergi, Nicolaos Vlastos et Anne Notaras," *Bibliographie hellénique*, I (Paris, 1885), CXXV–CXXX; cf. H. Hunger, *Reich der Neuen Mitte* (Graz-Vienna-Cologne, 1965), 388 f.

<sup>74</sup>Cf. M. Manoussakas, "Γράμματα πατριαρχῶν καὶ μητροπολιτῶν τοῦ ἱστ' αἰῶνος ἐκ τοῦ ἀρχείου τῆς ἐν Βενετίᾳ Ἑλληνικῆς Ἀδελφότητος," *Θησαυρίσματα* 5 (1968), 7–22; 13 ff.

<sup>75</sup>This last comment is, however, very hypothetical since other immigrants from Byzantium seem to have made a successful entry into Venetian big business, as shown by the example of Matthaios Spantunes and his son Theodoros Spantunes Kantakuzenos. It is likely that Matthaios was also from Constantinople; in the second half of the 15th century he made important deals out of Venice, including some involving grain from the Turkish East; these deals also involved his son, who played a certain role in East-West diplomacy at the turn of the 16th century, apparently making use of connections of relatives in Constantinople (Istanbul) and Thessalonike (Selénik). The wife of Matthaios and mother of Theodoros was Eudokia Kantakuzene; thus, the family was related to the Kantakuzenoi and, through them, to the Notaras family, and it was even related to the leadership of the Greek renegades on the Bosphorus, for the mother of Matthaios was a sister of Mesih Paşa. The latter made a career in the service of Mehmed II, even reaching the position of beglerbeg of Rumelia: cf. the fundamental paper of Ch. Bouras, "Τὸ ἐπιτύμβιο τοῦ Λουκά Σπαντούνη στὴ βασιλικὴ τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου Θεσσαλονίκης," *Ἡ Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Πολυτεχνικῆς Σχολῆς. Τμήμα Ἀρχιτεκτόνων* 6 (1973), 1–63, which was pointed out to me by A. E. Laiou. Since an entry in a document allows us to identify Mesih Paşa with a certain Palaiologos Megethos (cf. K.-P. Matschke, "Zum Anteil der Byzantiner an der Bergbauentwicklung und an den Bergbauerträgen Südosteuropas im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert," *BZ* 84/85 [1991/1992], 49–71; 67 n. 120), the mother of Matthaios Spantunes, too, can be classified as belonging to this branch of the Palaiologos family, contrary to Bouras (p. 16). Another sister of the two is married to Thomas Pyropoulos, who also plays an important role during the transition period to the Tourkokratia: cf. Matschke, "Zum Anteil," 67 ff. Thus, the two Spantunes had family connections within the Ottoman Empire. Jacob Notaras belonged to this clan, but it is still totally unclear whether he made use of these connections in the same way and with equal success. It may be that by escaping from the custody of Mehmed, he had

only to be close to his siblings, but also because he could not or did not want to cope with the business practices of the great Genoese merchants or the demands of their business, even though he came from those late Byzantine business circles which had come the farthest toward Western business and social standards. In this light, the preference of Loukas' children for Venice rather than Genoa would be further evidence that the late Byzantine Notaras family of civil servants and businessmen tried to establish very close ties with the Italians, but that it was never willing to be definitely and totally integrated into the world which had been created by the great merchant cities of northern Italy. Rather, it looked for its own paths into the future. I am convinced that the family felt the same way about the rising power of the Ottoman Turks.

Leipzig, Germany

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become a *persona non grata* in the Ottoman Empire and for this reason also could make little use of his Genoese privileges.